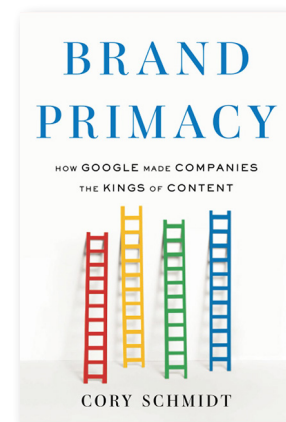


Brand Primacy

How Google Made Companies the Kings of Content

by **Cory Schmidt**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

The term SEO is used when trying to earn distinguished rankings on Google. SEO (search engine optimization) can be an extremely difficult concept to wrap your head around if you don't have the basic knowledge and understanding of it. With Google algorithms changing daily, it can be a gray area for anyone looking to enhance the status of their site in a search. When Google released its VINCE update, it became apparent that it was targeting higher qualities of content for searchers worldwide.

Brands became the forefront of Google's SERPs, making searches more closely related to user experience than "what pops up." Brand Primacy has become a more focused strategy for anyone looking to gain domain authority and a top ranking on the search engine. In *Brand Primacy: How Google Made Companies the Kings of Content*, Cory Schmidt discusses how the ever elusive search engine provider changed how it looks at a domain's authority. Brands who provide relevant and meaningful content are now the kings of the search engine – and if you want to achieve this, he will tell you how.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- What Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is.
- Ways to utilize technical and content-first SEO strategies.
- How video can increase SEO results.
- How Brand Primacy is trending in the Google search.
- How to gain domain authority.

Introduction

Google has given brands the opportunity to gain a ton of valuable traffic, but it is glaringly obvious that some companies are not taking advantage of this. Brands who utilize the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) offerings have an advantage – brand primacy. This is the concept that brands have advantage in Google rankings. Google has rolled out the red carpet and positioned it directly in front of a set of search results when the offering and algorithms are utilized correctly – with brand primacy front and center.

Basic SEO terms are necessary for understanding how to achieve success: domain, rank 1, rank 0, SERP (Search Engine Results Page), featured snippet, backlinks, domain authority, internal link, external link, search intent, and conversion. The path to accomplishing higher rankings is not easy but these foundational building blocks can make pursuing the path more attainable.

Brand Primacy – The New Sheriff In Town

Before understanding why certain websites and brands appear on the top of search engine rankings, the past has to be examined. Although Google's release brought about the speed necessary to retrieve the search results, it still needed to ensure universal accessibility to results making them fast and useful. The content on websites counts – with blogs being the majority of analytical traffic from Google.

Google's Early Days

Google favors brands. Recent Google algorithm changes, which break apart underhanded SEO tactics, also put brands into the driver's seat of searches. This means technical tricks no longer work. Instead, brands that create great content to solve the search intent of Google's users succeed. This brings about a competitive advantage for brands, providing them with an opportunity to reap the benefits of cheaper traffic and gives them an edge with their branding.

Brand Primacy has shifted the way information is consumed. The shift in information gathering has also changed Google. Not only the way Google, as an entity, handles decisions concerning the results they serve, but also regarding the overall existence of the site and how it functions.

Google's Part In The Brand Primacy Equation

When something is in question, people turn to Google for answers. Users know that Google is their best chance at finding the real answer for any topic – which is outlined in the company's branding. Brands are building domain authority by answering questions from searches on Google around what their products offer. Building this authority requires giving Google users a good experience and solving their search intent – a harmonious relationship that builds off of one another to increase domain authority. In the grand scheme of Brand Primacy, it requires brands to provide the content necessary with comprehensive coverage of the product, service, and topic.

The Brand Inclination According To Google

When Google realized the structure they had used for a decade was not working to enhance user experience, they knew the only way to deliver quality solutions within search results was by favoring brands. The Google update that changed everything was VINCE. The changes made to the search algorithm was to improve efficiency. With so many variables at play, a focus on user experience became imperative. Even though Google delivers daily updates, these are not typically notable – but there are periodic ones that change the course of the algorithm and has specific purpose. Notable updates include RankBrain, Panda, and Payday. VINCE is the day that brands began to win the algorithmic race. The update was quick, noticeable, and brought about change in competitive keywords that would favor first-page rankings for big brand domains vs. previously ranking sites.

SERPS And The Real Estate Of Search

Google makes SERPS much more top-heavy, which makes making Brand Primacy much more important. Over the last few years, Google has increased the total allotment of paid ads, allowing four paid results to top the SERP. This takes up approximately half the page of returned results due to the increase in sizing on the ads. The SERP is going to feed users things that Google feels fit their search intent, and the user behavior of the audience dictates this in the long run. Because Google favors brands, if companies focus their efforts on ranking for general search terms, there is a good chance they will be at the top of the page.

Implementing The Principles Of Brand Primacy

There should be two main focuses when structuring a domain's internal links to promote Brand Primacy – the paths the links route the users to and the anchors. Brand Primacy encourages brands to shape their website and structure in a certain way – to depict topic authority. The goal is to use topic authority to navigate and achieve topic authority. The biggest way to do this is through content that utilizes long-tail keywords and content clusters.

Blowing The Cap Off The Intent

Understanding intent does not mean knowing what the searcher is thinking, but rather the intent of the keywords being searched for. Brands spend so much time trying to cater to Google's algorithm that they fail to beat competitors using this strategy. The key to becoming dominant in the area of Brand Primacy is understanding the search intent – which is often a purchase, the answer to a question, or finding a specific site. Tailoring keywords and content that can encompass all of these build on better Brand Primacy.

Brand Awareness Plays A Part

Brand awareness is a measurement of how well people can recognize characteristics, qualities, and other aspects of a brand. The important thing is that if a brand has a strong awareness, it is likely more popular than other brands. Once Google has determined search intent, they feed specific brands to the top of the results – but this also includes the influence of the brand awareness on that search intent. So consequently, the higher the awareness and search intent, the higher the Brand Primacy within the results.

Domain Authority – How Expertise Drives Traffic

Domain authority is a term coined by Moz, referring to how well a website relates to a subject area or industry, and how this relation impacts its search engine rankings. Predicting how Google measures a domain can be relatively difficult, but there are a few factors that have impact on the process – branded search traffic, brand social influence, and links.

Building domain authority is how many brands achieve Brand Primacy. They provide a good experience for Google around the topic area, Google deems their domain and

authority, and their top- and bottom-of-the-funnel general search rankings go up.

A Deep Dive Into Backlinks

Google almost guarantees the brands that hit the top of the SERPs long-term survival. Those with a top position are more likely to get backlinks and occurs because so many websites find it useful to link to a certain website within their content. The more top results a domain has for general terms, the more likely they are to achieve domain authority. The larger the domain, the more likely it is to rank for more terms – a snowball effect. The higher the Brand Primacy, the higher the advantage of building momentum, especially on Google. That is why the brands with higher Brand Primacy tend to stay in more competitive locations within the search results. Backlinks that are gained from an authoritative brand are even more valuable – and brands should prioritize getting these backlinks from other brands.

Video, Meet Search

Creating videos and linking them to articles on specific topics creates an additional avenue to gain traffic. The more traffic, the more authority, and the boost in domain authority. To build a strong YouTube profile, it is important to remain focused on brand consistency, utilize featured channels, and truly embrace your brand in the “about” section. Google owns YouTube, which is important to remember. It is more likely to favor a YouTube ad in a search result than any other video offering. There is an advantage to be gained here.

Understanding, Then Outranking The Competition

You will not get anywhere with Brand Primacy or outranking on Google if you do not understand your competition. It takes more than just compiling a list of competitors that are outranking you on Google, it requires you to do a little research into their brand superiority. Next, you have to look at the content they are writing and how they behave on social platforms. Use their weaknesses and create new strengths and advantages for your own brand. What exactly are you doing that sets your brand apart from the competitor? Through this you can begin formulating your own plan and venture into Brand Primacy. Just remember – you can't beat them at their own game or by using their own tactics –

you have to differentiate yourself by digging deeper into the smaller details they are overlooking.

To Heed Or Not – Common SEO Advice

While it is important, domain authority with content is a better first approach to ranking. When you focus only on the technical aspects of your SEO and better your standing, you will still find yourself lacking because you do not have the content necessary to convert. Creating a strong content-first philosophy makes implementing the technical SEO fixes much easier – they build off of each other. There are several fallacies that come up when talking about SEO – SEO is dead, little things do not matter, sometimes sloppy is fine – all of these are perceptions that competitors want you to believe, when in reality they are working to achieve the dominant role. Brand Primacy allows you to focus on the truth and dispel the fallacies – the most important thing you can ever learn about SEO: this game, in which we ying, is a race against time.

How Does Google Benefit?

On one hand, Google receives high-quality content because it incentivizes brands to create it. On the other, it has the paid ads that may or may not result in sub par returns. Google's standards are ensuring that customers receive quality ads, while at the same time charging for non-organic rankings. The high quality of Google's SERPs have made it possible for the brand to build its authority – think back to the section where asked where do you go with a question. The answer? Google. The tried and true search results that have brought about the purchase, answer to a question, or finding a specific

website has spoken for itself. In the grand scheme of search engines – Google is using its own philosophies to rank on top.

Thoughts On A Changing Search Landscape

When looking at innovation, we picture immediate impact. Unfortunately, history speaks for itself, showing us that the process of replacing the old and implementing new always lags. As brands become more trusted, we will begin to treat them as the top sources available – a process that is slow but it is inevitably already happening. It is likely that Brand Primacy will become the norm in a landscape that is already becoming unrecognizable. In the future it is possible that Google will find itself at a crossroads – faced with the choice to further improve user experience or the need to adjust and mold itself accordingly with a new way of searching.

Conclusion

History has a tendency of repeating itself – Google itself is a tale of new ideas, ideas that challenge the status quo, ideas that are hard to grasp. These ideas and new perspectives go through a binary process. Either someone says yes to the new way of thinking and embraces it, or it ends up on a dusty shelf somewhere, failing because there was no level of commitment. While there are always trending ideas – right now Brand Primacy is at the forefront of your mind – which is good because that is what is trending, if you want to rank high in the Google search results. For success to happen now, it requires taking an “in the moment” approach – Google is waiting – making it possible for your brand to reach primacy if you reach for it.



Cory Schmidt is a globally trained expert in the SEO field, taking companies to the top Google search ranking promised land using his unique Brand Primacy model. A frequent speaker at marketing, sales, web development, and SEO seminars, Schmidt is known throughout the tech world as a marketing and sales leader. When he's not finding innovative ways to disrupt the world of marketing, he likes to travel, read, and, of course, write.

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